

# Recognitions at January 2009 State Board Meeting

The Milken National Educator Awards program is the nation's largest teacher recognition program. Since its inception, more than 2,300 educators from 48 states have been recognized with more than \$60 million in cash awards.

Dubbed the "Oscars of Teaching" by Teacher Magazine, the awards were created to reward, retain, and attract top professionals to the nation's schools.

In South Carolina, there have been 47 National Educator Award recipients whose awards have totaled more than \$1 million. These educators represent our profession's best. It's always awesome to see their reactions as they are recognized for the contributions they make every day.

South Carolina's newest Milken educators will travel to Los Angeles this spring to attend the Milken Family Foundation National Education Conference for:

- three days of workshops,
- discussion sessions and presentations by nationally recognized scholars and practitioners, and
- a gala ceremony where they will receive their \$25,000 awards.

## • **Bonnie Wilson – Principal, Ben Hazel Primary School (Hampton District One)**

State Superintendent Jim Rex (far right in photo) and State Board member Ben Mitchell (at left in photo) congratulate Milken recipient Bonnie Wilson (third from right), accompanied by Hampton One superintendent Doug McTeer (second from left) and flanked by her husband Dewanie and mother Sara Stanley. Wilson is a skilled leader and a life-long learner who is a source of motivation to her fellow educators.



Her school's achievements include (1) named a 2007 Showcase School by the Education Oversight Committee; (2) making AYP for 2005-07; (3) named an Exemplary Writing School for 2007-09; (4) named a Red Carpet School for 2005-08; and (5) achieving the highest score on the South Carolina Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale, 2004-05.

Wilson is a Palmetto Silver Award Recipient; a Hampton County Guardian Reader's Choice Award winner for Best Principal, 2005 and 2006; and a finalist for the South Carolina Elementary Principal of the Year. She graduated with a bachelor's degree in English from Charleston Southern University and earned a master's degree in educational leadership from The Citadel.

## • **Heather Bass – Lake Carolina Elementary School (Richland District Two)**

State Superintendent Jim Rex (far right) and State Board member Rose Sheheen (left) congratulate Milken recipient Heather Bass (center), accompanied by Richland Two superintendent Steve Hefner and Lake Carolina Elementary principal James Ann Lynch. Because of her enthusiasm for teaching and her ability to motivate and keep students engaged, Bass is often assigned students who are considered difficult to teach. She quickly designs successful strategies to help these young people reach their potential.



Bass is described by colleagues with words like “intensity,” “energy,” “unique” and “innovative.” Last year, 90 percent of her students met their growth targets for MAP mathematics, and her PACT scores are consistently among the state’s highest.

Under her care, students labeled “below basic” move up to “basic” and even “proficient.” While her low-performing students progress, Bass also remains conscious of the high performers, always challenging and encouraging them. She enjoys a great rapport with parents who are

eager to volunteer in her classroom. Bass quietly shows concern for students whose families are experiencing financial or personal struggles at home, often providing supplies or using personal finances to ensure that each student is able to participate in field studies. She is National Board-Certified, earned a bachelor’s from the University of South Carolina and holds a master of arts degree in teaching.

- **Two State Board members honored for service**

State Superintendent Jim Rex and State Board chair Kristin Maguire congratulate Al Simpson (center, photo at right) for his past year’s service as chairman of the board. Simpson lives in Lancaster and represents Judicial Circuit Six. In the photo below, Dr. Rex and Mrs. Maguire congratulate Rick Adkins of Anderson, who represented Judicial Circuit 10 on the board. His term of office expired at the end of December 2008.

